

Dear Community Leaders,

The issue of childhood obesity has risen in recent years to become one of the greatest health crises impacting the future of our children. Childhood obesity is now considered an epidemic that affects one in three children, and the crisis is growing (Cowley, 2000). According a recent statistic the health crisis affects 10-15% of youth today with the numbers tripling in the past twenty years (Childhood Obesity Foundation, 2006). Childhood obesity is known to be caused by such factors as sedentary lifestyles and poor eating habits. Obesity is also linked not only to such problems as depression, social isolation and decreased self-esteem, but also to an increase in the development of chronic illnesses such as type 2 diabetes and heart disease.

As a community we must take a stand to prevent and change the way obesity is affecting our children and their future. We need to work together to increase people's awareness of the magnitude of the problem and join forces to develop strategies for change. Prevention and promotion is the key to our children health and their future. Families, parents, teachers, health professionals and governments must join together to fight the obesity epidemic.

For more information on how you can help.....

Sincerely,

Cowley, G. (2000). Generation XXL: Childhood obesity now threatens one in three kids with long-term health problems and the crisis is growing. *Newsweek*, 136(1), 40-44. Retrieved September 25, 2006 from CINAHL database.

Childhood Obesity Foundation. (2006). *Identifying, evaluating and promoting best practices for childhood obesity*. Retrieved September 24, 2006, from <http://www.cofbc.ca/>